THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Indian business houses have imported rubber under various export incentive schemes.

A quantity of 5609 tonnes has been thus imported during July-December, 1991 as revealed from monthly returns furnished by them. Imports by some major manufacturers is as given below:—

	Tonnes
(1) MRF Limited	1391
(2) J.K. Industries	702
(3) CEAT Ltd.	686
(4) Govind Rubber Ltd.	666
(5) Metro Tyres Ltd.	396
(6) Dunlop India Ltd.	344
(7) Vikrant Tyres Ltd.	324
(8) Mittal Meditex (P) Ltd.	312
(9) Enkay (I) Rubber Co. Ltd.	258
(10) Apollo Tyres	211

All others are below 200 tonnes.

(c) and (d) Requests have been received from various interested parties to stop imports of natural rubber. However, it has not been found possible to do away with the facility of importing natural rubber under various export incentive schemes essentially with a view to make India's exports of rubber products competitive in the international market.

Export Earnings through Agricultural Commodities

1864. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 766 given in the Rajya Sabha on 3rd March, 1992 and state:

(a) what are the names of the agricultural commodities that have shown higher export earnings and those which have registered fall in earnings during the past four years; and

(b) what are the major factors affecting fall in the export of the agricultrual commodities?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) and (b) Export of all major agricultural commodities consistently registered higher export earnings except in the case of sugar, wheat and spices. Export of sugar and wheat depended largely on surpluses available after accommodating the domestic demand. Export of spices, in quantitative terms; have been steadily increasing since 1987-88 with a minor decline in 1990-91. The major constraints affecting the export of spices being: (a) increased domestic consumption; (b) availability of better and remunerative prices in the country; (c) low productivity level in India leading to higher cost of production; and (d) fall in international prices.

Trade agreement between India and Russia

1865. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent trade agreement between Russia and India have accepted common denomination convertible currency exchange rate with Rupee and Rouble currency;

(b) if so, whether this arrangement is only for this calendar year;

(c) what was the trade transaction between the two countries during last three years; and

(d) what is the agreed trade during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Russia, as an independent country of the Commonwealth of Independent States came into existence on 8.12.1991. As such, details of its trade transactions with India during the last three years are not available.

(d) In terms of the Indo-Russian Protocol for 1992 trade during the current year is targetted at US $2200 million against Rupee Payment. Additionally the Protocol permits transactions by way of counter trade, barter, payments in freely

convertible currency or any other internationally recognized form of business cooperation. A technical credit to Russia of not exceeding Rs. 850 crores has also been provided for in the protocol.

Opening of Sub Post Office and Branch Post Office in Almora Distt.

1866. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that residents of Basot have represented for opening a Sub-Post Office at Basot District Almora;

(b) whether it is a fact that they have also requested for opening branch post offices at Srikot and Gwelkhan; and

(c) if so, by when a sub post office at Basot and branch post offices at Srikot and Gwelkhan will be opened?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes Sir. The proposal for upgradation of Basot branch post office was examined but not found justified according to norms.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) In view of reply to part (a) and (b) above, the question does not arise at present.

Revision on pay scales of the Postal Inspectors and Assistant Superintendents

1867. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recommendations of Fourth Central Pay Commission in the matter of revision of pay scales of Inspectors and Assistant Superintendents in the Department of Posts have been implemented by Government;

(b) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) by when the said recommendations are likely to be implemented?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b) The Pay scales recommended by the IVth Pay Commission, in respect of Inspectors and Assistant Superintendents have already been implemented by the Government. However, the Commission's recommendations with respect to:

(i) introduction of an element of direct recruitment in the cadre of Inspectors;

(ii) merger of the two cadres; and

(iii) review of the pay scales of both cadres after implementation of (i) and (ii) above is still under consideration.

(c) Soon after introduction of direct recruitment in the Cadre of Inspectors is taken up, the recommendations will be implemented.

Memorandum to Prime Minister by Postal Employees Unions

1868. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a delegation of Postal Employees Unions led by a member of Parliament called on the Prime Minister on the 6th November, 1991 and submitted a memorandum;

(b) if so, what are the demands of these employees; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to fulfil these demands?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A statement indicating the demands of the employees contained in the memorandum and steps taken/views of the Government thereto is attached.